Political Novel

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By Judith Martin

Cynthia Rosenwald, who was Vice President Spiro Agnew's only staff speechwriter until she resigned last week, is writing a novel with a political background.

Sensationalism was not a characteristic of Mrs. Rosenwald's speeches. Those criticizing the press and those including terms like "effete corps of impudent snobs" and "kooks" were produced by other writers. The Vice President has used members of the President's speechwriting team, and often inserts his own colorful phrases.

The Vice President "took it all rather well" when she told him of her writing plans," Mrs. Rosenwald said, "but of course he worried. I told him, 'You're not in it, don't worry—but I do have a couple of swishy Secret Servicemen.' "

The leading character is a candidate in a presidential primary. There's a lot of sex, as well as politics in the book, she said. "Just in case you're wondering, there isn't a person in it from the Nixon administration—they're all too straight."

Eight chapters of the as-yet-untitled book ("I've been calling it 'Book' ") have been completed, and she is reworking the manuscript with a New York publishing house.

The chapters were written in 10 days, while the Vice President was touring the Far East. "I've never felt so happy and alive. That's what I want to do—creative writing in my own name," said Mrs. Rosenwald.

Mrs. Rosenwald denied reports that she quit because Agnew was using her material less often, explaining that she had been working only two or three days a week because of exhaustion and the illness of one of her three children.

"Of course I was doing less. Even the two or three days were too much for me," she said, "but it wasn't enough time to see him and talk to him. It used to be that when he got a few hours free, we just talked.

"He was wonderful about giving me time to work it out, but I wasn't able to. There was no real motivation for me to leave, but somebody had to break the knot. And as long as I was there, there was no motivation for him to find someone else."

She said that the one thing that would get her back into politics now is if Agnew's Administrative Assistant, Stanley Blair, decided to run for the governorship of Maryland. "But that would be only for the campaign," she said.